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SIXTH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON CLINICAL HEMORHEOLOGY  
Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 15-17 June 1989

WELCOME ADDRESS

Albrecht M. Ehrly  
Chairman of the Conference

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In sixty-five hours from now the 6th European Conference on Clinical Hemorheology will come to a close, hopefully without any serious complications. But before we come to the end, we first have to have an appropriate opening. So I would like to welcome you all to the 1989 Congress here in the Old Opera House.

The official title of this Congress includes the words "European". This is because no international society exists. It encompasses a loose union of various national hemorheological societies. In view of the very active participation and the wide range of contributions from our colleagues from other continents, this is de facto the International Conference on Clinical Hemorheology.

Chronologically, this is the 6th Conference, after a first Congress in Nancy in 79, then London in 81, Baden-Baden in 83, Sienna in 85 and Bordeaux in 87. These conferences have shown that this forum was extremely instrumental in furthering the necessary exchange of information and newest results and promoting discussion on questions of general interest. Retrospectively it can be said that this type of cooperation between the national societies worked out very well so that at present there is no urgent need for a European society with a European president or even an International Society with an international president and so forth.

Ladies and Gentlemen, two years ago in Bordeaux the European Clinical Hemorheology Coordinating Committee asked me to organize this congress in 1989. I accepted on the following conditions: Firstly that this conference should give absolute priority to clinical aspects - and indeed, more than 80 percent of the papers presented here have a clinical background. It was foreseeable, of course, that the number of participants would be markedly reduced by such a hurdle, since a lot of research tends to concentrate on in vitro experiments without any direct connection to the clinical situation.

**Secondly that great stress be laid on the highest possible scientific**

level. In order to attain this aim, we announced very frankly that a program committee would act as a true referee in selecting the papers. This measure probably contributed to the very high standard of the contributions submitted. But in spite of these restrictions, more than 200 papers were finally accepted.

My third priority was to push more younger specialists in the field of hemorheology to the fore than was the case up to now. As you can see from the program, we have chosen younger chairmen or cochairmen in order to give them the opportunity to present themselves and learn from the older generation of hemorheological researchers.

A fourth matter I turned my attention to was the question of registration fees, which I did my best to keep within the order of magnitude set by other comparable conferences - an important point when trying to make meetings attractive, especially for younger hemorheologists.

Finally I would like to add that the Executive Board at the Bordeaux meeting also granted me a free hand in selecting main topics, which I accordingly did. But as you can see from the program, there are also papers dealing with diabetes, vascular diseases and of course the effects of various drugs on the flow properties of blood. But drugs are not a main topic of this conference. I don't happen to have a slide here in my pocket as most experienced discussion speakers do, but I would nevertheless like to ask you for your attention for a few seconds. On the occasion of the 6th European Conference on Clinical Hemorheology a new book entitled "Therapeutic Hemorheology" has been brought out by the Springer Verlag. Its author is .. A.M. Ehrly. This book will be on display at the book stand at the exhibition area and you are invited to have a look at it during break.

Well, having ~~gotten over~~ this bit of publicity, I would like to draw your attention once again to the general heading of our meeting: "Clinical Hemorheology and Microcirculation". The motivation behind this choice of subject was to initiate closer cooperation between hemorheologists on the one hand and clinical microcirculatory researchers on the other. We will have ample opportunity for detailed discussion of past, present and future aspects of this cooperation, as seen from the clinical point of view during the coming lectures.

Some comments now on the organization of the Conference. Two years ago it couldn't be foreseen that outside circumstances affecting the budgeting of the Conference would deteriorate to such an extent. The main sponsors of the previous congresses were pharmaceutical companies, which holds true also for this Conference. But since then, the rheological properties of the money flow have been impaired by cuts in the health budget and by the increasing role of generic drugs, both reducing the income of pharmaceutical companies and leading them to rethink their sponsorship policies. In contrast to previous years, no company was prepared to take on the financial risk of such a Conference so that we were obliged to tap a larger pool of sponsors in order to make ends meet. The narrow financial base of the Conference has hampered organization - a problem we will also have to face in the future. In Frankfurt the situation was saved by bringing together three pharmaceutical companies, Abbott, Hoechst and

Lipha, to whom I am deeply indebted. We are very proud to have also the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft as sponsor. This made it possible to rent the Old Opera as conference site and to offer you an evening program, which I hope you will enjoy very much. In this connection I would like to invite you to take part in the Beer and Dixieland Party at Dreieichenhain Castle, where a great speciality, barbecued suckling pig, will be awaiting us. On Friday evening the traditional banquet will be held at the famous and unique Monastery of Eberbach, where we will first have a wine tasting stroll, followed by dinner. A few tickets for this event are still available. The price is 60 marks. Amongst your documents you will find vouchers for tea or coffee. Soft drinks and additional coffee can be ordered (and paid cash) from the personnel of the Old Opera.

Due to our budget difficulties we kept the Organizing Committee as small as possible. But I'm quite sure that this team has done its best. Best doesn't mean faultless. We had a delay in the printing of the final program and one of the exhibitors, namely the Schwarz Company, was not listed in the program, mishaps for which I would like to apologize and I hope you will forgive. Taking a look at the centre page of the program, you will also discover a further very disturbing mistake: Lunch has been replaced by Poster Session, which is of course more scientific but not very filling. On the large posters, hanging outside, you will find the finalized timetable showing that lunch break has been reinstated from 13.00 to 14.00 hr.

Anyone, who has organized a congress of this dimension, knows that such mistakes do happen. But I am quite convinced that the positive aspects of this congress will more than compensate for this and that we can all look forward to a fruitful and pleasant three days together. Again: Welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Clinical Hemorheology!



ALTE OPER, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, where the Conference took place